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## NATIONAL UNITS

THE report of the Committee on College Entrance Requirements ought to mark something like an epoch in the relation of the university to the preparatory school. It is so painstaking, so cautious and conservative, and yet so progressive, that it must surely render easy one or two important steps in advance.

The proper relation between preparatory courses and college requirements has nowhere been more felicitously stated than in these words of the chairman: "College courses ought to be so adjusted that every pupil at the end of a secondary course recognized as excellent, both in the quality and quantity of its work, may find the doors of every college swing wide open to receive him into an atmosphere of deeper research and higher culture along the lines of his mental aptitudes" (p. 7).

"Every young man or woman who has successfully devoted at least four years to earnest study in a well-equipped secondary school should be admitted to any college in the country, whether such a pupil has devoted a greater part of his time to Latin, Greek, and mathematics, or to Latin, modern languages and mathematics, or to Latin, mathematics, and the sciences, or to any other combination of studies which has developed his power and been in harmony with his intellectual aptitudes" (p. 8).

Wisely, however, the committee has not attempted to formulate secondary programs, nor to prescribe the way in which the university shall determine as to the excellence of the quality and quantity of preparatory work, nor to discover an infallible rule for distinguishing between "a combination of studies which develops the power of the pupil and is in harmony with his intellectual aptitudes" and one that does not. This is a land full of windmills and swarming with valiant Don Quixotes. As a matter of fact, many vagaries and differences of administration may be tolerated without endangering the real object of the committee. The vital point insisted upon is that all preparatory subjects required or accepted by reputable universities be defined in

a uniform way and conveniently measured in units or norms which shall pass current everywhere. That this would be an important step forward cannot be doubted. That the universities are ready for such an advance is almost equally certain. Indeed, the general principle has already found large acceptance. There are many differences of detail, but not a few institutions have tried to reach the same results as those for which the committee is striving.

Now, these differences of detail, while not very important in themselves, are, as the committee has pointed out, infinitely confusing. And all the strength that comes from united action is lost. The next step is to harmonize these varying statements and give the different subjects fixed values with reference to one another. Consider what this will mean. In the first place, it will vastly simplify the process of manufacturing school programs. So many school programs fail, not because of an unwise choice of subjects, but because too many subjects are chosen, and these are pursued by wrong methods and aim at wrong results. A definition of subjects, methods, and results to be obtained having the united sanction of the universities would put an end to unnumbered atrocities. There would still be many varieties of programs; but every program would fulfill the conditions of excellence as to quality and quantity of work undertaken. Not every school would attain to this excellence in practice. But it would be of immense value to have an intelligent and recognized standard by which schools could gauge themselves and be gauged.

Under this system pupils in any part of the country preparing for a given university would, within limits, be preparing for any university. This would certainly be an advantage to the preparatory student, and to the university also. It would raise the standard of entrance requirements in many institutions, and it would further the transfer of a student from one university to another, thus developing a migratory spirit which needs wise encouragement in this country.

The committee has clearly indicated the next step to be taken. It has not, however, provided for its actual accomplish-

ment. If, as I believe, the universities are ready for this step, cannot the SCHOOL REVIEW provide the little machinery necessary to set the column in motion? A conference, personal or by correspondence, of accredited representatives of a dozen or more of the leading universities could bring the thing about. With the committee's elaborate exposition of individual subjects as a basis, supplemented by the latest entrance statements of Harvard, Chicago, and perhaps others, taken in connection with the relative unit values already in use at Chicago, California, Stanford, and Harvard, it would not be insuperably difficult to reach a phrasing acceptable to all these institutions. And if acceptable to these institutions, it would inevitably come to be adopted by all institutions ambitious of university rank.

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